

**2020**

***Hocking Hills Scenic Byway*** Corridor Management Plan (CMP)

Ohio Department of Transportation

Submitted ***March 2020***



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page #
<b><u>I. INTRODUCTION</u></b>	<b>1</b>
A. Designation Summary	
B. Byway Route Map	
<b><u>II. BYWAY STRATEGIC PLAN</u></b>	<b>3</b>
A. Vision, Mission and Beliefs	
B. Accomplishments since last CMP	
C. Goals, Objectives, and Action Plans	
<b><u>III. BYWAY ORGANIZATION</u></b>	<b>6</b>
A. Structure and Organization	
B. Committees, Representatives, Partners, Stakeholders	
C. Leaders' Contact Information	
D. Level of Participation in State/Regional Meetings and Trainings	
E. Byway Leadership Succession Plan	
<b><u>IV. BYWAY CORRIDOR CONDITIONS</u></b>	<b>9</b>
A. Road Conditions and Signage	
B. Primary and Secondary Intrinsic Quality/Resources	
C. Changes in Intrinsic Quality/Resources since last CMP	
D. Accessibility to Intrinsic Quality/Resources	

**V. VISITOR EXPERIENCE**

**14**

- A. Interpretation since Designation
- B. Byway Story
- C. Future Interpretation
- D. Plans for Improving Visitor Experience
- E. Preservation

**VI. MARKETING AND PROMOTION**

**16**

- A. Current and Future Planned Marketing Activities
- B. Recommended Products or Attachments for Media and Public Relations

**VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**19**

- A. Ongoing Communication & Cooperation with Community Partners
- B. Public Meetings and Public Participation Opportunities
- C. Steps Taken to Update Byway Mission and Vision
- D. Narrative on Critical Issues and How They Will Be Addressed

**APPENDIX**

**20**

- A. Sign Inventory (Excel Spreadsheet of GIS data)
- B. Most Current Byway Map
- C. Maps Identifying Primary Intrinsic Quality/Resource Locations
- D. Seasonal Byway Photographs – 2 per season
- E. Marketing Material

## **I. INTRODUCTION AND MAP**

### **A. Byway Introduction**

The Hocking Hills Scenic Byway, established in May 2004, takes travelers deep into the historic hills of southeast Ohio. The Byway traverses' hills and valleys and past the six non-contiguous sites of the Hocking Hills State Park, Ohio's natural crown jewels.

The Byway also passed historically significant sights and businesses. The scenery all along the Byway is stunning in every season.

Begin on State Route 374 at US 33 in Rockbridge. State Route 374 was designed to connect the Hocking Hills State Park sites; Cantwell Cliffs, Rock House, Conkle's Hollow, Old Man's Cave, Cedar Falls and Ash Cave, from north to south.

The Hocking State Forest Headquarters was the Hocking County Honor Camp in the 1930's to house prisoners who were not a flight risk. These men planted trees, fought forest fires and helped take care of the parks. A guard went with them wherever they went. It was not necessarily economical, but it gave prisoners time in the outdoors and an opportunity to learn new skills.

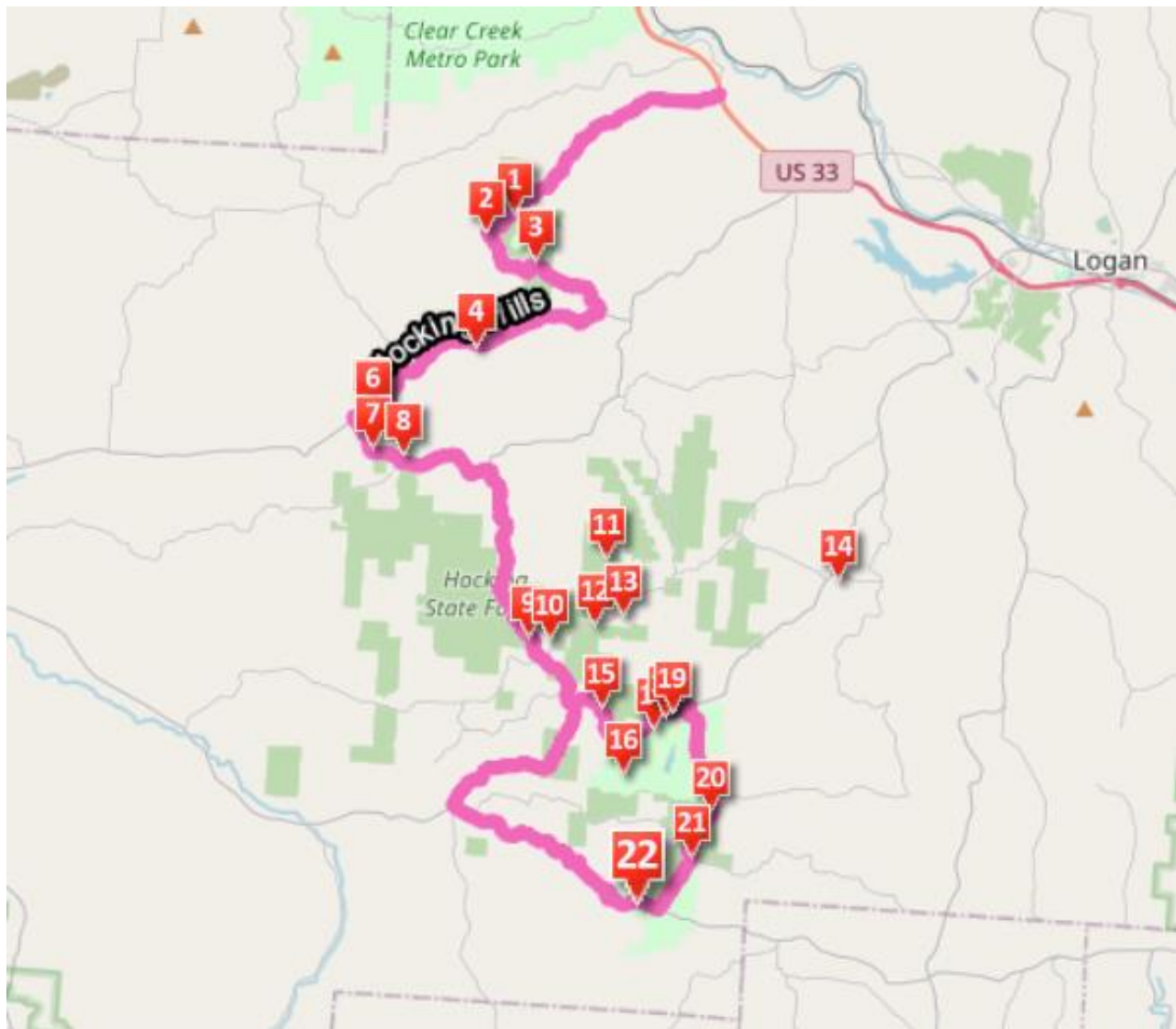
The remains of the Black Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp can still be seen just past the entrance to the Hocking State Forest. These men planted trees, created trails and built some of the structures found in the parks.

At mile 11.9 on the Byway is the Village of Mound Crossing. The mound located in the backyard of the old farmhouse was built by the Hopewell Indians before the birth of Christ.

The Hocking Hills State Park offers Naturalist guided hikes and activities throughout the year at all the park sites. All sites offer various length hiking trails. Ash Cave and Conkle's Hollow have handicap accessible trails. Along the trails, hikers are treated to sparkling waterfalls, pre-historic caves and breathtaking scenic vistas.

Whether looking for a lovely country drive while visiting the Hocking Hills or a more active experience the Hocking Hills Scenic Byway will exceed your expectations.

## B. Byway Route Map



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Hocking State Forest Area                           | 12. Hocking State Forest Rock Climbing & Rappelling |
| 2. Home of the Black Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) | 13. Happy Trails Horseback Rides                    |
| 3. Cantwell Cliffs State Park                          | 14. Hocking Hills Gem Mine                          |
| 4. Spirits of the Hills Fine Arts and Crafts Gallery   | 15. Grandma Faye's                                  |
| 5. Village of Mound Crossing                           | 16. The Hocking Hills System Dining Lodge           |
| 6. Grange Hall   | 17. Old Man's Cave                                  |
| 7. The Nestled In                                      | 18. Campground Office and Entrance                  |
| 8. Rock House  | 19. Archery Range                                   |
| 9. Hocking State Forest Headquarters                   | 20. Cedar Falls                                     |
| 10. Conkle's Hollow State Nature Preserve              | 21. Ash Cave Fire Tower                             |
| 11. Airplane Rock                                      | 22. Ash Cave  |

## **II. BYWAY STRATEGIC PLAN: VISION, MISSION, GOALS AND ACTIONS**

### **A. Vision and Mission**

#### **Vision:**

The Hocking Hills Scenic Byway deepens an appreciation of the irreplaceable beauty of the Hocking Hills with travelers ensuring all future generations the same opportunity to experience the region.

#### **Mission:**

The mission of the Hocking Hills Scenic Byway is to connect travelers to nature, the past and the present through sharing and protecting the unique landscape and stories of the region.

### **B. Accomplishments since last CMP**

The growing popularity of the Hocking Hills as a tourism destination has introduced many people to a lesser known region of Ohio. The last CMP was written in 2004. The Byway Committee was inactive until 2013. Upon reorganization in 2013 the Byway Committee has reviewed the integrity of the byway and proposed an addition of the Big Pine Loop, bringing additional recreational assets to the byway.

There was an addition of the John Glenn Astronomy Park in 2018.

The Hocking Hills State Park recently built a new visitors center to accommodate for 4,000,000 people annually. This was uncovered by Governor Mike DeWine on June 24th, 2019.

A new trail was recently added, the Whispering Cave Trail, that is a part of the Hemlock Bridge Trail. This new trail has the first-ever swinging bridge in the park.

### **C. Goals, Objectives, and Action Plans**

**Goal I:** Preserve the natural resources and beauty of the Hocking Hills region

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Person/group responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Partner with local entities and businesses	HHTA	Ongoing	• Partner with ODOT, ODNR, Friends of Hocking Hills State Park, Hocking County Soil and Water Conservation, Hocking Hills Conservation Association and Hocking County Engineer to reference the byway corridor management plan when making decisions on alterations to the roadway and state park sites along the byway	TBD
Logging buffer zone	HHTA & Byway Committee	Ongoing	• Request Department of Forestry to adopt a buffer	TBD

			zone along the highway when logging.	
Incorporate information about the byway in promotional materials.	HHTA & Byway Committee	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote information about Lilyfest, Hocking House Open House, Hocking Hills Indian Run, Hocking Hills Artists &amp; Craftsmen Association Gallery &amp; Market</li> <li>• Promote the byway at all existing events/festivals along and/or near the byway</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to create additional cultural activities and events along the byway such as Emma "Grandma" Gatewood Day April 27</li> </ul>	TBD

**Goal II:** Create diverse community partnerships to expand education and preservation of historic sites, stories and landmarks.

Objective	Person/group responsible	Timeline	Action Plan	Funding
Engage representatives from partner agencies and organizations to join the Byway Committee.	Karen Raymore	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the committee to meet as needed, although this is difficult to achieve</li> </ul>	N/A
To encourage land-use planning along the byway.	HHTA & partner agencies or organizations	3-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find a consultant for land-use planning in rural areas like Hocking County</li> </ul>	TBD

**Goal III:** Marketing and Accessibility to resources.

Objective	Person/group responsible	Timeline	Action Plan	Funding
Create and distribute Driving Tour Map	HHTA	Creation complete; distribution ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the byway as Car and Driver magazine's "Midwestern driving roads of choice." Distribute the Hocking Hills Driving Tour map through the Regional Welcome Center and Visitor Center in Laurelville</li> </ul>	TBD

Create new Byway Driving Guide	HHTA	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compile all new and still relevant information</li> <li>• Work with designers to complete an adequate driving guide</li> </ul>	TBD
Byway Micro Site	HHTA	May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create, manage, and maintain a byway micro site with outside group(s)</li> </ul>	TBD
GPS Based App	HHTA	March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with developers to make a GPS-based app for the byway</li> </ul>	TBD
Utilize all available marketing opportunities to promote cultural activities and events along or near the byway.	HHTA	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore different marketing strategies for the varying events in the area</li> </ul>	TBD
Expand education outreach to local schools	HHTA	May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach to schools about the app</li> </ul>	TBD
Provided updated byway information including web link to event coordinators	HHTA	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep up with changes along the byway and properly update information as needed</li> </ul>	TBD

**Goal IV:** Develop the Big Pine Loop extension.

Objective	Person/group responsible	Timeline	Action Plan	Funding
Apply for Scenic Byway designation	Byway Committee	Summer 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare the necessary application and submit to the Scenic Byway Advisory Committee</li> </ul>	TBD

### **III. BYWAY ORGANIZATION: STRUCTURE, COMMITTEES, VOLUNTEERS, AND PARTNERS**

#### A. Structure:

In 2013 the HHTA created the Hocking Hills Scenic Byway Committee. The Hocking Hills Scenic Byway has, since creation, existed under the umbrella of the HHTA.

Karen Raymore leads the committee and is the main person for all byway-related affairs.

#### B. Description of Current and Future Byway Committee Representatives, Partners and Stakeholders

##### Byway Committee:

- Bobbi Bishop – Bishop Educational Gardens, Original Byway Committee Chair
- Karen Raymore – HHTA Executive Director, Hocking Hills Conservation Association
- Ric Queen – Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
- Larry Gerstner – Hocking County Trustees Association, HHTA Board of Trustees
- Lorraine Carlson – Campground Owner, HHTA Board of Trustees
- Rick Webb – HHTA Board of Trustees, Hocking County Tree Commission, Hocking Hills Conservation Association
- Doug Parker – Co-owner ikarensell Ent., Sorrell & Co. Realtors, President, HHTA Board of Trustees
- Shyna Gaywell – Ohio Department of Transportation
- Tom Barrett – Ohio Department of Transportation
- County Engineer (William R. Shaw P.E., P.S.)
- County Planner (Randy Goldsberry)

The committee meets as needed. The Committee's next meeting will be in August 2019; date TBD.

Location: Hocking Hills Regional Welcome Center

##### Current Stakeholders:

##### OEPA – Ric Queen

- 50 W Town St Suite 700 Columbus, OH 43215
- 614-224-0946
- [Ric.queen@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:Ric.queen@epa.ohio.gov)
- <https://www.epa.state.oh.us/>

##### ODNR

- 2045 Morse Road Columbus, OH 43229
- 614-265-6565
- <http://ohiodnr.gov/>

##### ODOT – Tom Barrett & Shyna Gaywell

- 1980 W Broad St Columbus, OH 43223

- 614-466-3932
- [Tom.barrett@dot.ohio.gov](mailto:Tom.barrett@dot.ohio.gov)
- [Shyna.gaywell@dot.ohio.gov](mailto:Shyna.gaywell@dot.ohio.gov)
- <https://www.transportation.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odot/home>

#### Hocking County

- 1 E Main St Logan, OH 43138
- <https://www.co.hocking.oh.us/>

#### Hocking County Commissioners

- 1 E Main St Logan, OH 43138
- 740-385-5195
- [commissioners@co.hocking.oh.us](mailto:commissioners@co.hocking.oh.us)
- <https://www.co.hocking.oh.us/Commissioners>

#### Hocking County Engineer – William R. Shaw

- 1286 California Ave Logan, OH 43138
- 740-385-8543
- <https://www.hockingcountyengineer.com/>

#### ODOT D-10 DDD – Darla Miller

- 338 Muskingum Dr Marietta, OH 45750
- 740-373-0212
- [Darla.miller@dot.ohio.gov](mailto:Darla.miller@dot.ohio.gov)
- Website

#### Hocking Historical Society

- 64 N Culver St Logan, OH 43138
- 740-385-6026
- [hockinghistorymuseum@gmail.com](mailto:hockinghistorymuseum@gmail.com)
- <https://hockingcountyhistorymuseum.org/>

#### Hocking Hills Tourism Association – Karen Raymore

- 13178 SR 664 S Logan, OH 43138
- 800-462-5464
- [kaymore@explorehockinghills.com](mailto:kaymore@explorehockinghills.com)
- <https://www.explorehockinghills.com/>

#### Hocking Hills Chamber of Commerce – Amy O’Nail

- 96 W Hunter St Logan, OH 43138
- 740-385-6836
- [amy@hockinghillschamber.com](mailto:amy@hockinghillschamber.com)

- <http://hockinghillschamber.com/>

Bishop Educational Gardens – Bobbi Bishop

- 13200 Little Cola Rd Rockbridge, OH 43149
- 740-969-2873
- [Rbishoplily2@gmail.com](mailto:Rbishoplily2@gmail.com)
- <https://www.hockingswcd.com/bishop-educational-gardens.html>

Hocking County Planner – Randy Goldsberry

- 93 W Hunter St Logan, OH 43138
- 740-380-9634
- [regionalplanner@co.hocking.oh.us](mailto:regionalplanner@co.hocking.oh.us)
- <https://www.co.hocking.oh.us/regionalplanning/node/1>

Other stakeholders:

Benton Township

Good Hope Township

Laurel Township

Local businesses & residents

Hocking County School District

#### C. Primary and Secondary Byway Leader Contact Information

Primary Contact	Secondary Contact
Karen Raymore Hocking Hills Tourism Association Phone: 740-385-2750 Email: <a href="mailto:kaymore@explorehockinghills.com">kaymore@explorehockinghills.com</a>	Bobbi Bishop Bishop Educational Gardens Phone: 740-969-2873 Email: <a href="mailto:Rbishoplily2@gmail.com">Rbishoplily2@gmail.com</a>

#### D. Level of Participation in State/Regional Byway Meetings and Trainings

There has not been any in the last year. Most of the times of the meetings has not worked with a schedule. The last one attended was most likely in 2017.

#### E. Byway Leadership Succession Plan

Leadership of the Hocking Hills Scenic Byway will be part of the Hocking Hills Tourism Association Executive Director's duties. Currently that position is held by Karen Raymore. Future HHTA Executive Directors will assume this duty.

#### **IV. BYWAY CORRIDOR CONDITIONS: ROADWAYS, SAFETY, INTRINSIC RESOURCES, AND ACCESSIBILITY**

##### **A. Road Conditions and Signage**

The Hocking Hills Scenic Byway connects the six non-contiguous sites of the Hocking Hills State Park which is Ohio's most visited state park with more than 3 million people coming to the park each year. The byway is traveled by millions as they explore the Hocking Hills region. Except for the newly added Big Pine Scenic Loop, the Hocking Hills Scenic Byway is all state maintained roadway. Big Pine Road is maintained by Hocking County and is considered a primary road for maintenance as it is the primary feeder road to several township roads where vacation rentals and homes are located. The publicly owned recreational sites along the byway are maintained by ODNR.

There are dangerous spots along the byway, which Hocking Hills is known for dangerous twists and turns. Spots along the byway are unable to be promoted because there are not pull-offs that are optimum for safety. It is not possible to have pull-offs for many resources due to private land ownership.

374 has recently be resurfaced and is a smoother drive.

##### **i. Existing official ODOT byway signs.**

See appendix.

##### **ii. Local byway signs.**

None.

##### **iii. Interpretive signs.**

See appendix.

##### **iv. Future sign needs.**

See appendix.

##### **B. List of Primary and Secondary Intrinsic Qualities/Resources**

<b>Primary Intrinsic Quality</b>	<b>Secondary Intrinsic Quality</b>	<b>Site &amp; Location</b>	<b>Description</b>
Recreational	Natural	Hocking State Forest (39.33200, -82.34612)	About 3.3 miles past the Hopewell Mound, you will drive up a hill and see the sign that announces you are entering the Hocking State Forest area.
Historic	Cultural	Black Civilian Conservation Corp Headquarters (39.33039, -82.34909)	This is the home of the Black CCC Corp. These men planted the trees, created trails, and built some of the structures found in the parks. At the time they lived here, segregation was common. The house was the headquarters for the camp.

Recreational	Natural	Cantwell Cliffs (39.32335, -82.34597)	1.9 miles past the CCC Camp Headquarters you will see the Cantwell Cliffs parking lot. This is the first of the Hocking Hills State Park areas. The park was named for Joshua Cantwell. Although it is least visited, many visitors proclaim the Cantwell area as the most picturesque in Hocking County.
Cultural		Bishop Educational Gardens (39.31195, -82.36297)	Located 1 mile off the byway and home to the Annual Lilyfest, this property is owned by Hocking County Soil and Water. Events for school children as well as adults are held year-round.
Historic		Hopewell Mound and Grange Hall (39.3037, -82.37409)	At the Village of Mound Crossing, you will find a beautiful old farmhouse with a mound in its backyard. This mound was built by the Hopewell Indians before the birth of Christ. St. Rt. 374 originally ran around this mound. The road was straightened and relocated about a half mile farther down. Across the street is a Grange Hall, an important gathering place in the agricultural community.
Natural	Scenic	Rock House (39.29716, -82.36903)	The Rock House is unique of all the Hocking Hills State Parks because it is a true cave. It is a tunnel-like corridor situated midway up a 150-foot Blackhand Sandstone cliff. The "Rock House" is complete with seven Gothic-arched "windows" and great sandstone columns which bear its massive roof. The Rock House has ceiling 25 feet high, while the main corridor is 200 feet long and 20 to 30 feet wide. Rock House was used by many past visitors as a shelter. You will find hominy holes, small recesses in the rear wall which served as baking ovens for Native Americans. Past visitors have chiseled out "troughs" or "holding tanks" in the stone floor of Rock House. These were used in the melting of pine knots to make turpentine, which was used by the Indians and pioneers for many things. It is believed that many not-so-welcome visitors used the Rock House, like robbers and horse thieves, which earned the cave a reputation of "Robbers Roost".
Historic	Natural	Hocking State Forest Headquarters (39.27367, -82.34393)	In the 1930's the state built the buildings on this site to house prisoners who were not a flight risk. The camp was called the Hocking County Honor Camp. The actual camp was located about where the garages now stand. These men planted trees, fought forest fires

			and helped take care of the parks. A guard went with them wherever they went. It was not necessarily economical, but it gave prisoners time in the outdoors and to have an opportunity to learn new skills.
Recreational	Natural	Conkle's Hollow (39.27157, -82.34929)	This park is a rugged, rocky gorge, one of the deepest in Ohio. The timeless beauty of the rustic valley is surrounded by towering 240-foot Blackhand Sandstone cliffs protecting a wilderness of hemlocks, birch, various trees, shrubs, ferns and wildflowers in this beautiful gorge. The hollow was named for W.J. Conkle who left his name and the date 1797 carved into the sandstone on the west wall of the gorge.
Historic	Cultural	Grandma Faye's (39.27157, -82.34292)	As you turn north onto State Route 664, heading for Old Man's Cave, you will pass Grandma Faye's; a Hocking Hills institution. As they say, "If Grandma Faye's doesn't have it you don't need it." The store has everything from a deli counter, camping supplies, convenience store and souvenirs galore.
Recreational	Natural	John Glenn Astronomy Park (39.40015, 82.55440)	Opened in 2018, the John Glenn Astronomy Park is a state-of-the-art facility with guided weekend evening programs and open daily
Recreational		Hocking Hills State Cabins, Whispering Cave Trailhead, Disc Golf Course (39.26031, -82.32931)	The Hocking Hills Park rental cabins are at the end of a mile-long scenic driveway. The Whispering Cave/Hemlock Bridge trail is the newest trail in the Hocking Hills State Park. Adjacent to the new trail is the new Disc Golf Course. Construction of the new State Park Lodge is expected to begin in May 2020.
Recreational	Natural	Old Man's Cave (39.26261, -82.32357)	Old Man's Cave is the hub of the Hocking Hills State Parks. The park gets its name for Richard Rowe, a hermit, who lived in the area in the mid 1800's and is reported to have stayed here until his death. In this park, the creek has carved a magnificent gorge through the entire depth of Blackhand Sandstone. There are 2 sections: The Upper Falls and the Lower Falls. Trails take you down from one to the other. The vertical cliffs reveal deep recesses, potholes, and cracks that widen in some places so that massive blocks of rocks have tumbled from the cliffs. The lush vegetation varies and gives the eye a feast regardless of the season.

Recreational	Scenic	Campground Office/Entrance (39.26289, -82.32281)	This building is the headquarters for Old Man's Cave Campgrounds and the Hocking Hills State Parks. Many renovations have been made to the campground including increased full hook-up, pull through RV site. The entry to the campground winds up over the cliffs above the caves. The campground is equipped with its own swimming pool also.
Recreational		HHSP Archery Range (39.2632, -82.32157)	An outdoor archery range is located immediately north of the state park office for the public's enjoyment. The new archery range features a variety of targets suitable for all skill levels.
Recreational	Scenic	Mountain Bike Trails (39.26188, -82.31693)	Two mountain bike trails, each 2 miles in length, are located off State Route 374. The purple trail loop is moderate, and the orange trail loop is difficult.
Recreational	Scenic	Rose Lake Trail/Fisherman's Parking Lot (39.25916, -82.31703)	A parking area and trail head to Rose Lake, a popular lake for fishing, canoeing, kayaking and wildlife viewing.
Recreational	Natural	Cedar Falls (39.24985, -82.31484)	On the right, you will see the beautiful curved block wall that graces the entry to Cedar Falls. This park was named because early white settlers mistook the towering hemlocks for cedar trees. Two deep grooves and numerous potholes have been created by the action of the stream as it cascades over the face of the Blackhand Sandstone. At one time a grist mill was located just above these falls.
Recreational	Natural	Ash Cave (39.23767, -82.32721)	Most of the caves in our park system are recess caves. Ash Cave is the largest and most impressive of this type of cave in the state of Ohio. The rim spans 700 feet around to form a sandstone horseshoe. A misty waterfall plunges 90 feet from the rim to the valley floor below. Huge mounds of ashes discovered here by early settlers are thought to be ancient campfires of early Indian inhabitants which gave this cave its name. The ashes were excavated in 1877 to reveal many Indian artifacts as well as bones of animals. The cave was a meeting place in early 1800's. The shelter is large enough to seat hundreds and the natural acoustics are excellent. Ash Cave became an official park in 1925.

### C. Changes in Intrinsic Qualities/Resources since last CMP

The Hocking Hills State Park Dining Lodge burned down in December 2016, making a big loss for the byway and many other entities in the area. There is a plan to rebuild this starting next May, and it being called the crown jewel of Ohio State Park Lodges. This will include conference facilities, overnight lodging, as well as a restaurant.

There have been no significant changes to the intrinsic qualities/resources along the byway other than the loss of the lodge. There has been an increase in travelers along the byway since its inception in 2004 due to an increase in visitors to the Hocking Hills from all over the country.

### D. Accessibility to Intrinsic Quality/Resources: Pull-Offs, Parking, Rest Areas, Visitor Amenities, etc.

All interpretation, Pull-Offs, and visitor amenities along with associated parking, public restrooms and amenities are to be accessible per the Americans with Disability Act. This includes accessibility for persons with mobility, hearing, sight, and cognitive impairments. The 2010 US Census revealed that at least 56.7 million or 20 percent of the US population have some level of disability, about 20 million of which are mobility impaired Americans. Therefore, for the story of the byway to be told to all, new programs and improvements need to be accessible while existing sites should have transition plans in place by those who own and maintain them.

The byway organization will have a hand improving accessibility by raising awareness about the need to remove barriers to access and by installing all interpretive signs or other improvements according to the United States Civil Rights ADA laws. For free information and guidance, please contact the Great Lakes ADA Center at 800-949-4232 (V/TTY).

Access to the sites along the byway has remained consistent as the primary intrinsic qualities are state owned and managed. There have been no new pull-offs, parking or rest areas added. The Visitor Center at Old Man's Cave was renovated in 2012. Rest rooms at Old Man's Cave and Ash Cave will be renovated as part of the ODNR \$8.3 million capital improvement plan for Hocking Hills State Park.

An archery range and two mountain bike trails have been added to the Hocking Hills State Park with access from the byway.

The gorge trail at Conkle's Hollow and the Ash Cave trail are both handicap accessible. There is a partial trail on the rim of Old Man's Cave which is also accessible. These trails not only accommodate wheelchairs but are also frequently used by families with strollers. The new visitor's center is also accessible with many new amenities.

There are many visitor amenities, rest areas, and much else along the byway for all to enjoy.

## **V. VISITOR EXPERIENCE: INTERPRETATION, STORIES, AND PRESERVATION**

### **A. Interpretation since Designation**

The Hocking Hills Scenic Byway connects the six non-contiguous sites of the Hocking Hills State Park through the Hocking State Forest and past several private properties with historical, cultural and recreational significance. The theme of the byway is the unique geological history of the region. The byway has been presented to visitors through a printed guide describing the points of interest along the route. Because the Hocking Hills Scenic Byway is the connector for the Hocking Hills State Park the byway benefits from interpretive programs throughout the park by ODNR. It is unknown what the impact of the byway has had on tourism growth. The annual visitation to the Hocking Hills State Park has grown from 2 million in 2004 to over 3.5 million in 2015.

Interpretation along the byway is generally handled by ODNR.

### **B. Byway Story**

The Byway Story:

The Hocking Hills Scenic Byway leads travelers through some of the most scenic regions of the Hocking Hills. Beginning at US Highway 33 and State Route 374 the byway winds through the Hocking State Forest, past prehistoric Native American mounds and links all six non-contiguous sites of the Hocking Hills State Park.

Along the byway travelers will find sites of historic significance such as the remains of the Black CCC Camp and small family cemeteries. There is evidence of the millions of years of natural history all along the byway. This history spans the Mississippian Geologic Period from 330 million years ago to the modern-day tourism industry which has grown up around these natural wonders.

Travelers have several sites along the byway for a variety of recreational activities. Hiking is the most popular activity with well-marked and maintained trails in each of the Hocking Hills State Park sites. Additional recreation includes fishing, hunting, canoeing, kayaking, horseback riding, archery, swimming, mountain biking, rock climbing and rappelling.

The byway takes on a new personality with each season. Winter covers the hills, gorges and rock outcroppings with a blanket of snow. Waterfalls are suspended in frozen animation as a surreal serenity encompasses the region. Spring brings wildflowers, migratory birds and a million shades of green across the landscape. Summer vacationers fill the cabins, campsites and parks enjoying the warm weather. In autumn the Hills become a canvas for Mother Nature's brightest colors and the byway becomes a fall foliage spectacle.

Lodging, dining and shopping are also all available for travelers' pleasure along the byway. From cozy cabins to luxury inns and lodges there are accommodations for all tastes. Fine dining, casual buffets and all-American burger joints can be enjoyed along the byway. Artist studios, gift shops and convenience stores offer everything from one-of-a-kind souvenirs to camping supplies.

### **C. Future Interpretation**

The Committee will be reviewing better site signage at secondary sites. This will not happen for 2-5 years. In the event Ohio designates an official Ohio Scenic Byway month the HHSB will explore the opportunities to have special events/interpreters along the byway during that month.

#### D. Plans for Improving Visitor Experience

Interpretation along the byway is primarily left up to ODNR, but there are many things being done to improve visitor experience. The future development of an interpretive app will enhance the visitor experiencing by providing a narrative tour triggered by the GPS coordinates of each point of interest which is currently being developed. A new printed brochure is being developed and will improve visitor experience. The website is being updated and will include a portion for the Hocking Hills Scenic Byway.

#### E. Preservation

The most significant threat to the Hocking Hills Scenic Byway is the proliferation of illuminated billboards. They are threatening the dark night sky which is imperative to the continued use and enjoyment of the John Glenn Astronomy Park as well as the many rental cabins and lodges outfitted with telescopes for star gazing.

The HHTA is collaborating with other organizations and agencies to advance countywide zoning which will address light pollution as well as corridor protection.

The HHTA works with the Friends of Hocking Hills State Park to preserve and support the Hocking Hills State Park facilities and programs. Funds from the annual Hocking Hills Indian Run have been contributed for the purchase of equipment, improvements to recreational facilities and supplies needed for naturalist programming. HHTA also provides all the refreshments served at special event hikes; Christmas at Ash Cave, Sweethearts Hike, Grandma Gatewood Fall Color Hike. The Associations are committed to sustaining the natural and built intrinsic qualities, many of which are located on the byway.

## **VI. MARKETING: PROMOTION, FEATURED ATTRACTIONS AND FUTURE PLANS**

### **A. Current and Future Planned Marketing Activities**

#### **Current:**

The Hocking Hills Scenic Byway is marketed by the HHTA. The cost of marketing the byway is part of the overall Hocking Hills marketing budget, funded by the HHTA. The byway is promoted in the annual Official Hocking Hills Visitors Guide (275,000 copies distributed throughout the U.S. and Canada). The byway app will be prominently featured in the 2021 Visitor Guide. A digital version of the Official Hocking Hills Visitors Guide is also available at [ExploreHockingHills.com](http://ExploreHockingHills.com).

The Hocking Hills Arts & Ag Map was introduced in 2011. The map identifies art events, galleries, farm markets, agriculture attractions and antique shops. The Hocking Hills Scenic Byway is highlighted on the map.

HHTA publishes and distributes the Hocking Hills Driving Tour Map which promotes the Hocking Hills Scenic Byway as the primary of three recommended cruising routes.

#### **Future:**

In 2016 a full color byway guide will be printed and distributed at the Hocking Hills Regional Welcome Center in Logan and the Hocking Hills Visitor Center in Laurelville. It will also be available online as a downloadable document or by delivery via USPS.

The Byway Committee is also researching the feasibility of a GPS driven smart phone app. When a driver approaches one of the intrinsic qualities along the byway an automatic audio guide will begin to tell the story of the site including instructions on pull off availability and access information. The primary obstacle to this marketing tool is lack of full cell phone service coverage in the region. It is improving each year and the Committee will continue to monitor coverage.

A new micro site within the Hocking Hills Tourism website is being built with the URL, [hhsenicbyway.com](http://hhsenicbyway.com). This site will provide byway resources, links to other scenic byways in the region and the ODOT Scenic Byways website.

### **B. Recommended Products or Attachments for Media and Public Relations**

#### **i. Short description of byway for use in publications.**

The Hocking Hills Scenic Byway follows State Route 374, merges with State Routes 664 and 56 to take drivers past several sites of historical significance as well as the six non-contiguous sites of the Hocking Hills State Park. The Big Pine Loop includes recreational sites in the Hocking State Forest.

#### **ii. Seasonal digital photographs (at least 300 dpi).**

See appendix.

iii. Brief description of the top 5-10 unique/authentic attractions on the byway.

#	Name	Description	GIS
1	Cantwell Cliffs	Remote and eye-catching, Cantwell Cliffs is known for its deep valleys, cliffs and rock shelter. Visitors can either hike the rim trail or follow the narrow passageway along the valley floor. One of the most unique features in the area is "fat woman's squeeze" a narrow passage visitor must access to reach the bottom of the gorge.	GIS: 39.539749, -82.575945
2	Rock House	Rock House was used as a shelter for robbers, bootleggers and horse thieves. Now visitors can enjoy a winding forested trail that leads to the only truly cave-like feature in the park. In the early 1900's, a hotel was once located near the shelter house at the entrance of Rock House. A 1/4-mile trail leads to an opening in a cliff face with gothic-like windows and awesome views. Look for small recesses in the back wall of Rock House that were used as baking ovens for Native Americans staying in the cave. Troughs in the floor were believed to be used to catch water.	GIS: 39.495240, -82.615252
3	Conkle's Hollow	Visitors hiking Conkle's Hollow trails are in for a spectacular treat of wilderness and high, rugged cliffs. There is both a rim trail which circles the gorge atop the cliffs and a lower trail leading through the hollowed-out gorge itself. The trail was named for W.J. Conkle who left his name carved in the sandstone on one wall of the gorge. Be Careful! The upper trail is not recommended for children. Hiking can be hazardous.	GIS: 39.452879, -82.572148
4	Old Man's Cave	One of the most popular attractions at Hocking Hills State Park, Old Man's Cave is a grand display of nature's beauty with its covering of Eastern Hemlocks, sheer cliffs and waterfalls. Thousands of years of water flowing through the valley have cut away the Blackhand Sandstone and provided a trail for visitors to follow. Open all year long, Old Man's Cave features many unique bridges and scenic views. A single trail meanders through the recess cave.	GIS: 39.434686, -82.541574
5	Cedar Falls	Nearly hidden in the thick layers of hemlocks, Cedar Falls has one of the largest waterfalls in the Hocking Hills Region. Visitors can expect to see moss-covered cliffs, a rugged trail and maybe the remnants of a grist mill that was built above the falls in the mid-1800's.	GIS: 39.417215, -82.525359
6	Ash Cave	Located in the southern edge of Hocking County, Ash Cave can be reached by walking a handicap accessible trail that leads hikers through a beautiful gorge lined with stately hemlocks. Although the cave was named for the huge pile of ashes found by early settlers in the cave shelter, the 23 sources of the ashes is still a mystery. Towering hemlocks, a cascading waterfall and a wide recess cave make Ash Cave one of Hocking Hills State Park's most popular hiking trails. The trail leading to the cave is asphalt and easily accessible for wheelchairs and strollers.	GIS: 39.395993, -82.545927
7	John Glenn Astronomy Park	The John Glenn Astronomy Park was created in 2016 and now serves the community and visitors by providing education, natural, and fun experiences for all ages.	GIS: 39.431201, -82.552987

iv. Provide website/URL (if available) and local website/URL that manages byway.

A new micro site within the Hocking Hills Tourism website is being built with the URL, hhscenicbyway.com. Site will be completed by November 1, 2016

<http://www.dot.state.oh.us/OhioByways/Pages/HockingHills.aspx>

v. Marketing contact information:

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HHTA

740-385-2750

[kraymore@explorehockinghills.com](mailto:kraymore@explorehockinghills.com)

## **VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: COMMUNITY PARTNERS, PUBLIC FORUMS, AND CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **A. Ongoing Communication and Cooperation with Community Partners**

The Scenic Byways Committee will provide a report at all HHTA Board of Trustees meetings as needed. The HHTA Board meetings are published in the local newspaper and open to the public. The Scenic Byway Committee activity will also be included in reports to the Hocking County Commissioners at a published, open meeting.

### **B. Public Meeting and Public Participation Opportunities**

#### **Public Participation:**

The Hocking Hills Scenic Byway Committee was revived in 2013. The Committee has been meeting since mid-year 2013. In March 2014 a public meeting was held. The meeting was announced in the local newspaper and on the local radio station. Notice of the meeting was sent to all elected officials. Two private citizens, one elected official and five byway committee members were present.

As part of adopting countywide land use plan and zoning ordinances the Byway will be a focus for the protection of the dark night sky and scenic assets. Any proposed land use plan/zoning will be presented to each township.

### **C. Steps Taken to Update Byway Mission and Vision**

The Mission and Vision have not changed.

### **D. Narrative on Critical Issues and How They Will Be Addressed**

The billboards business is a huge threat. The byway is not a Federal Aid Primary (FAP) route nor a National Highway System (NHS), and therefore has no regulations of billboards along the byway.

Light pollution is also a major issue in the area. As the population grows, so do buildings and light pollution in the area. This affects the wildlife that is native to Ohio.

Traffic, safety, and pull-offs are one of the main concerns of the byway as well as the area.

## VIII. APPENDIX

### ***A. Ohio Byway sign inventory (Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet, GIS information formatted as latitude, longitude as per ODOT guidelines)***

Current Signs:

#	Byway	Direction	Condition	GIS
1	HHB	S	Good	GIS: 39.57617, -82.5235
2	HHB	S	Good	GIS: 39.52773, -82.557
3	HHB	E	Good	GIS: 39.52764, -82.5571
4	HHB	W	Good	GIS: 39.52762, -82.5571
5	HHB	W	Good	GIS: 39.50433, -82.6285
6	HHB	N	Good	GIS: 39.50438, -82.6284
7	HHB	N	Good	GIS: 39.43999, -82.5641
8	HHB	E	Good	GIS: 39.44007, -82.5639
9	HHB	E	Good	GIS: 39.44085, -82.5631
10	HHB	W	Good	GIS: 39.44002, -82.5639
11	HHB	E	Good	GIS: 39.43971, -82.5307
12	HHB	N	Good	GIS: 39.43974, -82.5308
13	HHB	W	Good	GIS: 39.43982, -82.5305
14	HHB	W	Good	GIS: 39.39344, -82.5372
15	HHB	E	Good	GIS: 39.39415, -82.5395
16	HHB	W	Good	GIS: 39.3943, -82.54
17	HHB	W	Good	GIS: 39.41768, -82.5997
18	HHB	E	Good	GIS: 39.41655, -82.6015
19	HHB	S	Good	GIS: 39.41778, -82.5998

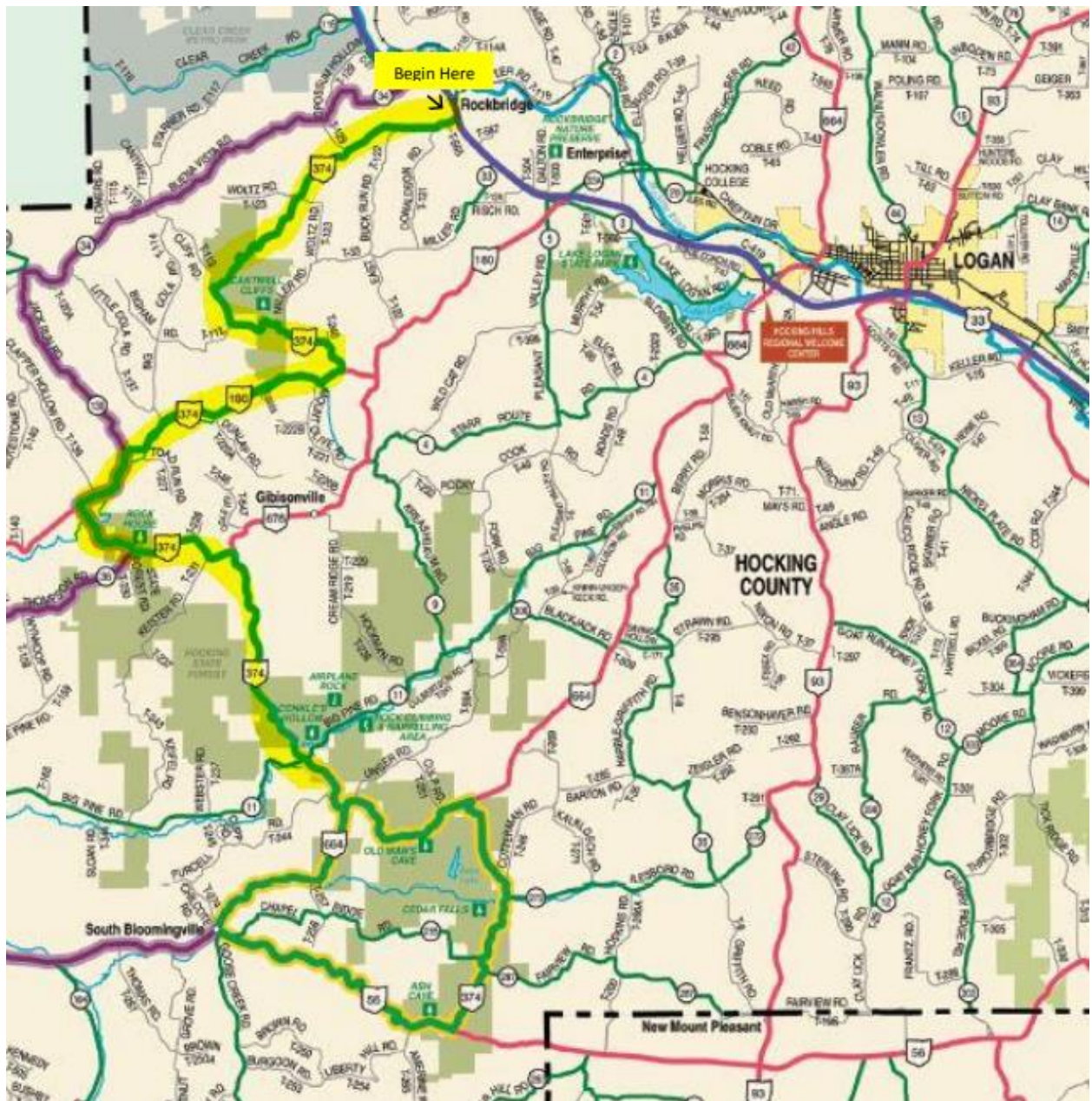
Interpretive signs:

#	Byway	Name	Sign type	GIS
1	HHB	Cantwell Cliffs	ODNR Sign	GIS: 39.32335, -82.34597
2	HHB	Rock House	ODNR Sign	GIS: 39.29716, -82.36903
3	HHB	Conkle's Hollow	ODNR Sign	GIS: 39.27157, -82.34292
4	HHB	Old Man's Cave	ODNR Sign	GIS: 39.26261, -82.32357
5	HHB	Cedar Falls	ODNR Sign	GIS: 39.24985, -82.31484
6	HHB	Ash Cave	ODNR Sign	GIS: 39.23767, -82.32721

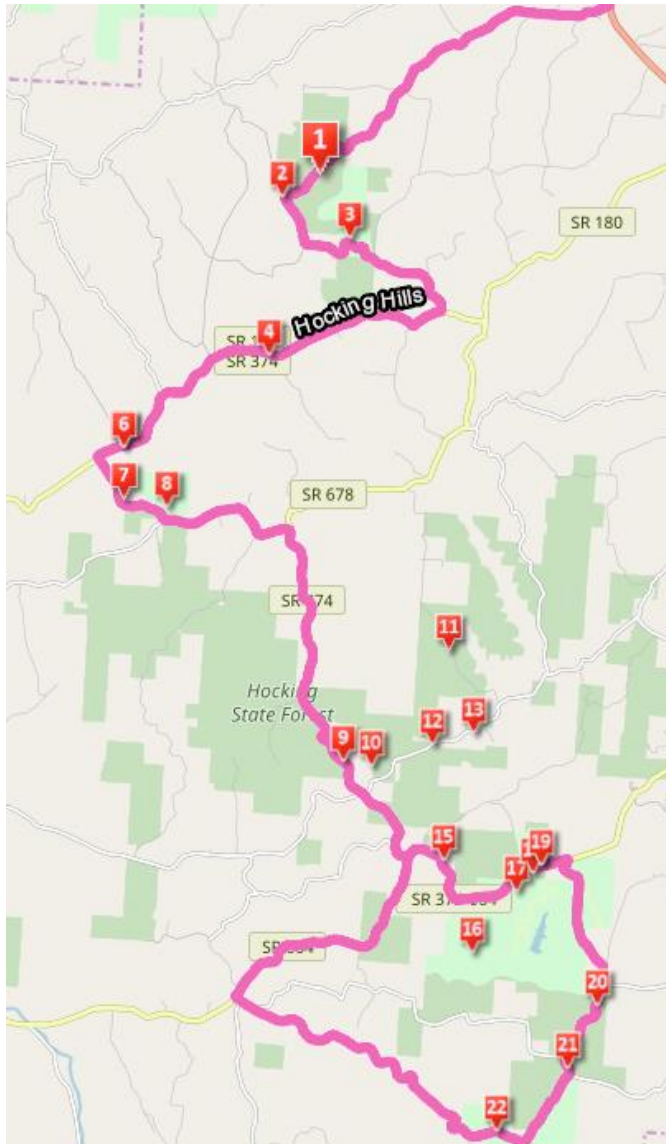
Future sign needs:

#	Byway	Location	Sign Type	GIS
1	HHB	State Route 374 & Big Pine Road	ODOT byway sign	GIS: 39.27104, -82.34631
2	HHB	State Route 664 & Big Pine Road	ODOT byway sign	GIS: 39.30434, -82.28327
3	HHB	Black CCC Camp	Ohio Historical marker	GIS: 39.33039, -82.34909
4	HHB	Grange Hall	Ohio Historical marker	GIS: 39.30371, -82.37409

## B. Most Current Byway Map



## C. Maps Identifying Primary Intrinsic Quality/Resource Locations



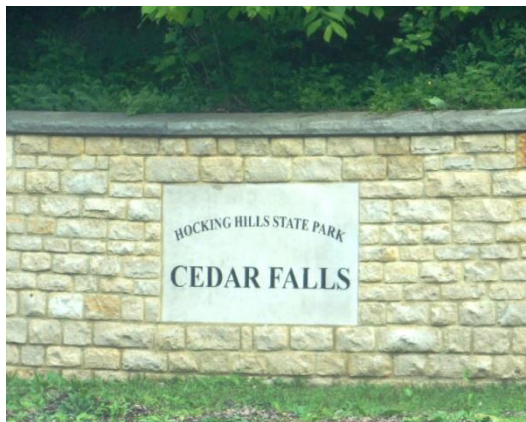
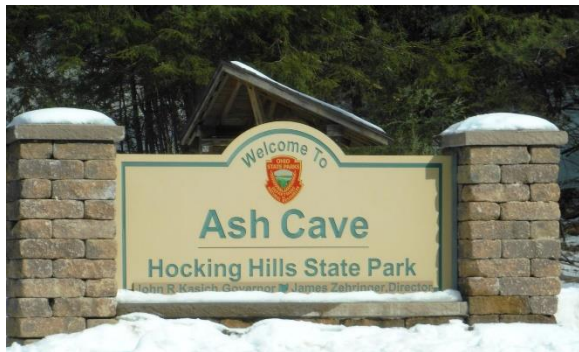
**D. Byway Photographs-** *Include several images of your byway, at least one from each season.*













**E. Marketing Materials- If applicable.**



